

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I urge support of the resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 794, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

CONDEMNING THE UNAUTHORIZED, INAPPROPRIATE, AND COERCED ORDINATION OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS BY THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 804) condemning the unauthorized, inappropriate, and coerced ordination of Catholic bishops by the People's Republic of China, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 804

Whereas the Catholic Patriotic Association of China is a government-sanctioned organization that does not represent the majority of Chinese Catholics, and has been used by the Government of the People's Republic of China to oppress Catholics who choose to remain loyal to the Pope as their spiritual leader;

Whereas on April 30, 2006, the Chinese Government-sanctioned Catholic Patriotic Association of China conducted an unauthorized episcopal ordination of the priest Joseph Ma Yinglin, elevating him to the office of bishop without the approval and against the wishes of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI;

Whereas on May 3, 2006, the Chinese Government-sanctioned Catholic Patriotic Association of China conducted an unauthorized episcopal ordination of the priest Joseph Liu Xinhong, elevating him to the office of bishop without the approval and against the wishes of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI;

Whereas on May 14, 2006, the Chinese Government-sanctioned Catholic Patriotic Association of China installed Bishop Vincent Zhan Silu as Bishop of Mindong Diocese without the approval and against the wishes of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI;

Whereas, according to information reported by the Vatican, bishops and priests in the People's Republic of China have been subjected to strong pressures and threats to take part in the episcopal ordinations which, being without pontifical mandate, are illicit and, besides, contrary to their conscience;

Whereas the entire world follows with attention the progress of religious freedom in China and had hoped that such deplorable episodes by now would belong to the past;

Whereas, following a trip to China in August 2005, the United States Commission on

International Religious Freedom reported that the Chinese Government continues to systematically violate the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief, contravening both the Chinese Constitution and international human rights norms;

Whereas on May 3, 2006, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom announced its 2006 recommendations to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and continued to identify China as one of ten "Countries of Particular Concern";

Whereas Chinese law and policy restrict religious activities to those activities associated with the five officially-sanctioned "patriotic" religious organizations;

Whereas all other collective religious activities in China are illegal, and individuals from "unregistered" religious groups are subject to harassment, detention, and arrest;

Whereas freedom of religious expression is a fundamental right enshrined in the United States Constitution and recognized by all civilized nations; and

Whereas China, like all members of the United Nations, is bound by Article 18 of the Uniform Declaration of Human Rights which states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance"; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the actions of the Government of the People's Republic of China to coerce Catholic bishops in China, both those in the Catholic Patriotic Association of China and those who remain loyal to the Pope, to violate their consciences and consecrate bishops in defiance of Rome;

(2) extends its deepest sympathy and condolences to the Catholic population of China and the Catholic Church for this insult to their beliefs and religious practices;

(3) reaffirms the right of all religious organizations to choose their leaders in a manner that is free of intimidation, terror, or coercion in accordance with Article 18 of the Uniform Declaration of Human Rights;

(4) urges the Government of China to end its repression of religious organizations, recognize the ecclesiastical authority of religious leaders to provide spiritual leadership to their followers, and end the practice of only allowing religious worship through state-sanctioned patriotic religious associations; and

(5) encourages the Government of China to refrain from additional ordination of Catholic bishops while the Vatican and the Catholic Patriotic Association of China resolve their differences and adopt a mutually acceptable process for approving the elevation of bishops.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the chief sponsor of this resolution, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I need to start my remarks with an acknowledgment of the extraordinary leadership that the gen-

tleman from New Jersey has provided long in the House as a defender of religious freedom, and the topic before us with this resolution is one that I know is very dear to his heart, and so I am grateful for his leadership on this topic.

Madam Speaker, this resolution is simple and self-explanatory. Any truly free society must, by definition, accord its citizens freedom to seek a relationship with God according to the dictates of their conscience and choose spiritual leaders whom the worshipers believe are best suited to guide in establishing that relationship.

Recently, the People's Republic of China violated the religious freedom of its Roman Catholic citizens by imposing Beijing's choices for bishops rather than allowing the Vatican to make these appointments. This resolution condemns that action and calls upon the Chinese government to refrain from any further unauthorized ordinations.

There are few actions, Madam Speaker, more central to religious practice than choosing the spiritual leaders of a congregation. Each Sunday, Catholics throughout the world celebrate Mass and communally recite the Apostles' Creed, which includes a statement of belief in the holy Catholic church. As an intimate part of that belief, Catholics acknowledge the supreme leadership of the Pope of Rome in all spiritual matters and as the chief administrator of the church.

I am sure none of us would tolerate government coercion of any type in choosing the leaders of our churches, synagogues, temples, and religious organizations. Nevertheless, the Chinese government does not allow Catholics to run schools or recognize openly the authority of the papacy in many fundamental matters of faith and morals. The Chinese government also continues to insist as a precondition for establishing diplomatic relations that the Vatican cede its role in the selection of bishops to the government-controlled Catholic Patriotic Association. A government that purports not to believe in God at all has no business choosing religious leaders.

Madam Speaker, the leaders of China consistently seek to position their country as one of the leading nations of the world. The Chinese people make no secret of their goal to establish their nation as an equal to the United States. Well, leadership brings responsibility. Religious repression is wrong wherever it occurs, and civilized nations rightfully deplore the lack of tolerance found in many backward and regressive societies. China, however, claims to aspire to a higher standard, which is why their recent actions are so disturbing.

China is an ancient nation with a proud history. They are the fountainhead of Eastern philosophy, the birthplace of Confucius, possibly the greatest secular thinker the world has ever known. Analects 15:23 of the teaching

of Confucius states: "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."

The early Chinese emperors embraced this teaching, and China was providing shelter and refuge to Nestorian Christians when Europeans were still burning heretics at the stake. Unfortunately, while religious freedom has been moving forward in Western democracies, it appears to be on the retreat in China.

Nevertheless, China became a signatory to the Uniform Declaration of Human Rights when they joined the United Nations. The ordinations that we today condemn are a direct violation of Article 18 of the Uniform Declaration of Human Rights, which states, and I quote, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest this religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance."

No one forced China to join the United Nations or to ratify the Uniform Declaration of Human Rights. They did so freely and without coercion. Indeed, the government in Beijing worked diligently for many years to displace Taiwan as the recognized government of China. Consequently, they now have a responsibility to live up to their standards and their great history, proud traditions, and U.N. obligations. My resolution calls upon them to do just that.

Madam Speaker, I hope that my resolution will focus attention on the advancement of religious freedom not just in China but throughout the world and particularly in our own country. Thomas Jefferson taught us that, "God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that his justice cannot sleep forever."

Whatever liberties we may possess, whatever privileges we may earn, whatever prosperity we may enjoy as individuals or as a nation, the most fundamental freedom of all is the right to establish our own relationship with God. This is the seminal freedom of all other freedoms that we cherish.

Whenever, wherever this core freedom is under assault, free people everywhere have a fundamental responsibility to defend it. We cannot ignore the suppression of religious freedom in China and expect it to endure in the United States.

Now, while we can, Congress must intrusively and decisively take a stand on behalf of Chinese Catholics and all others who wish to worship God in a manner and through a confession of their own choosing. We must insist that all members of the community of nations respect individual religious freedoms as the condition for mutual

respect. Any nation that interferes with individual religious freedom and the freedom of spiritual communities to order their own affairs to the degree that the Chinese government has intervened in Catholicism cannot aspire to a place of leadership in the modern world.

Repression, Madam Speaker, is like a cancer. Left untreated, it will grow in size and power until it overwhelms the entire body. Only by vigorous early intervention can a doctor stop the spread of infection or a free nation prevent the spread of repression. If we do not stand with the Catholics of China now, who will stand with us in the future? And if we don't stand with Chinese Catholics, how can we aspire to be a symbol and defender of freedom throughout the world?

Madam Speaker, I call on my colleagues to pass this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I want to commend my good friend from Pennsylvania for his authorship of this most important resolution as I rise in strong support of it.

Sometimes what is self-evident to civilized democratic governments is sadly lost on the Chinese leadership in Beijing. Such was the case in early May when a government-sponsored committee in Beijing elevated two Catholic priests to the level of bishop without the approval of the Vatican.

Madam Speaker, I firmly believe that it is up to the Catholic Church to determine its leadership. Everywhere else in the world Pope Benedict the XVI selects the bishops, not communist atheists in some government politburo.

But we should not be surprised by this latest intrusion into religious life by the Chinese government. Eleven years ago, this same government abducted a 6-year-old Tibetan boy who had been selected by the Dalai Lama as the next Panchen Lama, a title conferred on the second leader of Tibet. The boy and his family have never been seen again. He is believed to be the world's youngest political prisoner. Soon after the abduction of this little boy, Beijing selected its own Panchen Lama, without seeking approval from the spiritual head of Tibetan Buddhists, the Dalai Lama.

Madam Speaker, whether it is Catholics or Tibetan Buddhists, China has an obligation under its own constitution and the international conventions to which it is a party to ensure religious freedom. It has failed miserably to live up to this sacred obligation. Our resolution highlights the latest outrage in China's systematic denial of religious liberty to its own citizens. I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank my good friend and colleague from Pennsylvania, as Mr. LANTOS said, for authoring this very important resolution, but

also for his very eloquent statement moments ago regarding the historical context of this resolution and the ongoing issue of religious persecution in China, meaning the lack of freedom there. I appreciate his focus on the Uniform Declaration of Human Rights which so clearly establishes the right of conscience and the right of all persons to practice their faith as they see fit.

As he so aptly pointed out, the Chinese have freely acceded to the Uniform Declaration, and to so many other human rights accords that have been promulgated by the U.N. Sometimes for international consumption and for PR purposes, and regrettably they do not live up to either the letter or the spirit of these agreements to which they have given their solemn word.

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Madam Speaker, this resolution which condemns the People's Republic of China for its continued interference into the international efforts of the Catholic Church and its persecution of Catholics loyal to the Vatican is certainly a very timely resolution.

The state-controlled Catholic Church in China, which does not represent the majority of Chinese Catholics, continues to ignore the Vatican's wishes by consecrating new bishops without the consent of the Pope. In April and May of this year, the Chinese Government-sanctioned Catholic Patriotic Association of China conducted two unauthorized ordinations of priests to the office of bishop, and the unauthorized installation of another bishop, despite requests from the Vatican to delay these actions.

According to the Vatican, bishops and priests in China are subject to strong pressures and threats to take part in ordinations which have not been approved of by the Pope and are contrary to their faith. While I am saddened by these reports, I am not surprised. The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom reports that the China Government continues to systematically violate the freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief and the testimonies of so many persecuted individuals. For example, Bishop Su of Baoding Province, is a gentle and kind man who I met in the 1990s. I point out to my colleagues that soon after our visit, he was rearrested on false charges, released and rearrested again. He spent 30 years of his life, this brave Catholic bishop, for loving God. Even today, we do not know about his whereabouts, although there have been sightings from time to time.

As my colleague pointed out, in defiance of the U.N. article 18 of the Uniform Declaration of Human Rights, the PRC continues to restrict religious activities to those not associated with the five officially sanctioned religious organizations. Men and women that attempt to practice their faith outside of

these five approved religions, such as the more than 10 million Roman Catholics, face harassment, imprisonment, torture and death.

We have no wish to sanction the worshippers in the Catholic Patriotic Association in China; rather, we wish to offer our support to the Catholic population of China that is persecuted by its government for their faith. We condemn the Chinese Government's persecution of the Catholics and its refusal to permit a Vatican-sponsored Catholic church to operate legally in China. This is a great resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF).

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. I heard Mr. ENGLISH speaking and wanted to come over to add my support for this resolution.

Frankly, this whole place ought to be packed with people speaking on behalf of this resolution. Today in China, the Catholic Church is being severely persecuted. Why has the administration been silent, and other than this resolution, why has the Congress been relatively silent?

There are a number of Catholic bishops that are in jail today, as stated in the New York Times piece the other day. There is also the issue of what they have done to the Vatican with regard to the Chinese Communist Government. Evangelical church leaders are being persecuted. I just wanted to put my two cents in with regard to support of this.

For Members who just think this is another political thing, this is a moral issue.

Isaiah says, "Learn to do right, seek justice, encourage the oppressed." By passing this resolution, we encourage the oppressed.

Isaiah goes on to say in Isaiah 59, "The Lord looked and was displeased that there was no justice." When the Lord looks at China, he has got to be displeased that there is no justice.

Isaiah goes on to say, "He saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one to intervene." Fortunately, Mr. ENGLISH, Mr. SMITH and Mr. LANTOS are intervening.

But this Congress has to do more, and this administration's silence is becoming deafening on this issue. The condition in China with regard to the Catholic Church, the Protestant Church, the Uighurs, the Buddhists is worse today after President Hu left than before President Hu came.

I want to thank the gentlemen for cosponsoring this. We ought to have a roll call vote. Frankly, everybody ought to vote on this issue because this would send a message to the Chinese Communist Government that this Congress will become again like the Congress was during the 1980s during the Reagan administration and will not stand for it.

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 804, Condemning

the unauthorized, inappropriate, and coerced ordination of Catholic bishops by the People's Republic of China. I am concerned by reports that on April 30, 2006, and again on May 3, 2006, bishops and priests in the People's Republic of China were subjected to strong pressures and threats to participate in episcopal ordinations against the wishes of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI. The ordinations were conducted by the Catholic Patriotic Association of China and without the express approval and sanction of the Holy See. Such ordinations are illegitimate. I urge the People's Republic of China to refrain from pressuring or coercing Chinese bishops and priests to support these ordinations.

Freedom of religious expression is a fundamental right enshrined in the United States Constitution and is recognized by all civilized nations. Freedom of religion and conscience is also enshrined in Article 18 of the Uniform Declaration of Human Rights, to which the People's Republic of China is a signatory. Chinese law and policy, however, continues to restrict religious activities to those associated with the five officially sanctioned "patriotic" religious organizations. Additionally, the Catholic Patriotic Association of China does not represent the vast majority of Chinese Catholics and has no ecclesiastical authority to choose spiritual leaders for Catholics in the People's Republic of China.

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom identifies China as one of ten "Countries of Particular Concern." H. Res. 804 sends a strong message to the People's Republic of China to refrain from pressuring and coercing Chinese priests. This resolution also sends a strong message to the Catholic Patriotic Association of China to discontinue the practice of ordaining priests without the express support of the Holy Father, the Pope. Not doing so is an insult to the universal Catholic Church.

I strongly support this resolution. I urge my colleagues' support.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 804, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey.

There was no objection.

CONDEMNING THE ESCALATING LEVELS OF RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 608) condemning the escalating levels of religious persecution in the People's Republic of China, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 608

Whereas the Constitution and laws of the People's Republic of China purport to provide for religious freedom, however, these freedoms are substantively ignored;

Whereas all religious groups and spiritual movements must register with the Chinese Government, which monitors religious services and judges the legitimacy of religious activities;

Whereas unregistered religious groups in China continue to experience official interference and members of religious groups have been subjected to intimidation, harassment, and detention;

Whereas many religious leaders and adherents in China, including those in official churches, have been detained, arrested, or administratively sentenced to prison terms in reeducation-through-labor camps;

Whereas religious believers are denied the ability to hold public office not by law, but by a logical extension of the fact that most government positions go to members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and CCP membership and religious belief are considered incompatible;

Whereas numerous abuses of unofficial Catholic clergy have occurred, including the detentions of Bishop Zhao Zhendong, Bishop Jia Zhiguo, Bishop Yao Liang, Bishop Su Zhimin, Bishop An Shuxin, Bishop Lin Xili, Bishop Han Dingxiang, and Bishop Shi Enxiang, as well as other Catholic priests and lay leaders who have been beaten or otherwise mistreated;

Whereas the Chinese Government-sanctioned Catholic Patriotic Association of China conducted unauthorized episcopal ordinations of the priests Joseph Ma Yinglin and Joseph Liu Xinhong, elevating them to the office of bishop without the approval and against the wishes of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI;

Whereas numerous abuses of Protestant House Church Leaders have occurred, including the detentions of Pastor Gong Shengliang, Pastor Zhang Rongliang, Luo Bingyin, Li Cuiling, Wang Chaoyi, Yang Tianlu, and Zhao Xinlan, as well as other Protestant House Church Leaders who have been beaten or otherwise mistreated;

Whereas the whereabouts of Gendun Choekyi Nyima, the boy identified by the Dalai Lama as the 11th Panchen Lama and detained by Chinese authorities ten years ago, when he was six years old, are still unknown;

Whereas, according to the Department of State, Chinese authorities continue to restrict Muslim religious activity, teaching, and worship in Xinjiang, including reported prohibitions on the participation and religious education of minors;

Whereas the Chinese Government continues its brutal campaign to eradicate the Falun Gong spiritual movement and thousands of its members have been subject to